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THE MAN WHO IS REBORN AND RISES AGAIN IN CHRIST FEELS HIMSELF FREE IN THE VERY DEPTH OF HIS BEING.

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Liberty and Love

RORY WELCH, O.CARM.

Freedom is a desired good which has stirred men in every age, from the Machabean revolutionaries to the Negro demonstrators in the United States. Where it is present, men jealously watch and protect it; where it is absent, no effort, even death, is considered too much to possess it. Countries take pride in their independence, peoples relish freedom, individuals constantly demand freedom. Without it, a man is not a man.

Those particular men who, through a happy combination of talents, providence, and the propitious moment have led a people out of some type of oppression or bondage to a new existence as free, independent people, are the men most admired and remembered. It is the spirit of such men as Moses, Judas Machabeus, Daniel O'Connell, Simon Bolivar, Abraham Lincoln or Martin Luther King which a people tries to keep alive. The laws followed by a people are followed only because they preserve a spirit, not because a law is to be followed. When this spirit is not present, when the leader's influence is gone, laws lose their meaning and a people dies.

The greatest liberator of all time, the one who emancipated the largest number of people, was not a military leader or a political figure. He was the Son of God, a man. His vision of mankind infinitely surpassed the vision of the wisest leader who ever gave thought to man's journey on earth. In him was the spirit of man, the true destiny of peoples. Any hope that ever burned in a man, any ideal that ever seized him, any dream that inspired him found its reason in this Son of Man, and its support on his shoulders. He alone understood the yearnings of man, yearnings the source of which and the outcome of which man himself could not really fathom. He understood the nature that cried in man, and he knew what it was that called this nature.

Man knew He would come on this earth, and he came. Man watched. A life was being lived, by a child, then by a boy, then by an adult, and always he was God. Words used over and over for centuries finally seemed to have meaning when they came from

him. Roads were walked by him and for the first time the roads seemed to go somewhere. He stopped on his journey, turned, beckoned, and said, "Come, follow me." And he said, "Sell what you have. Don't be encumbered and held back, because I'm taking long strides, moving freely, without a place to lay my head. Come on! Most of your troubles you yourself made. That's what's holding you back. Shuck them off. Forget yourself, and put a spring into your step. There's not much time to be free. And a whole world is waiting for you. Are you going to kneel in the dust all day and tie your shoe?" And he went down the road, walking right past encroaching authority, public opinion, security, nameless fears. He hardly had time for looking back down the road, so sure was he and anxious for his goal. And he walked right to his death. Then man, following, stopped and realized that a road only went somewhere when He walked it. The road was not the way; He was the way.

So, to be him was the solution; to have his life meant freedom. But only through death can man become one with Christ. In death man becomes a true son of God, with Jesus Christ his brother, and the freedom won for him by Christ, the freedom of the Sons of God, becomes his.

Man dies in Baptism. He dies to a self chained by original sin. With faith and love, he begins to live the life of a free man. All spiritual books extol the freedom of the man in grace, the man in union with the Trinity. And the closer this union, the more grace-filled a man is, the more freedom he possesses. Saint John of the Cross put it this way: "Lose all and you will gain all."

Now, theoretically, the most free person of all should be the religious. After all, the religious has totally dedicated himself to the God-Man, to living his life and experiencing the beatitude that is heaven. The religious life, by eliminations and practices, has been structured to help the person achieve this goal. Freedom, if anywhere, should be found in such a life.

But look around. Look at religious. Where is this freedom? In general, religious do not have a noticeable air of freedom about them. As a matter of fact, they do not seem to know they are free. If anything, the opposite appears to be true. Many look cramped and confined. And it is not the room they are in that

gives the impression. It is the expression on their face, their walk, their stiffness of mind coming across in so many ways to the observer.

Religious use some of the noblest, boldest language in describing their state as Sons of God. But often they show artificiality, over-correctness, a hesitancy in living. Their very presence in a group and their manner of speaking has something apologetic about it. Where is the boldness, brightness, confidence of the man of God? Jesus Christ came that man might be free — and free on earth. He did not come simply to help us endure our time on earth until death ended this existence. Man is to be free now, and it is to be a freedom of the whole man. Christ did not die just for souls. He died for men, with their bodies and souls. And this freedom is not to be robbed by the devil, nor is it to be robbed by other men, by institutions, traditions, circumstances, by a stifling atmosphere of coldness, sophistication or cynicism.

The Christian life is exciting; it is an adventure. But it is an adventure that is passing by many religious, if one is to judge by appearances. What happened to religious life that it should take such an uninviting form? How can people so close to Christ, so close to the life of the Trinity, be chained in their actions and reactions? The body should show the freedom Christ won because it is as much the object of redemption as the soul.

Although man is one, a distinction might be useful here to help explain the apparent contradiction found in religious. For the sake of practicality, man's actions can be grouped into three categories. He lives on the spiritual, psychic, and somatic levels. This simply means man has somatic or bodily acts, psychic or rational acts, and acts on the deep level of spirit. Together they constitute man's nature. Acts of the spirit would be the highest and most simple acts of the intellect and will — for example, acts of contemplation of God. The psychic or rational level is the ordinary area of psychological consciousness. It includes the lower operations of reason and will, namely, discursive reasoning, judgments, choices, and all the images, feelings, emotional reactions of psychological experience. The somatic level is that of exterior expression, sensate life, relationships to outside reality.

Ideally, man would live from his spirit. Here is the deepest level of the soul where intellect and will are rooted. Here the Holy Spirit, grace, and the Gifts dwell. The higher should rule the lower, producing an harmonious orientation toward God. But, while original sin did not take away anything essential to man, it did disrupt the harmony found in man so that the spiritual does not hold sway over the merely psychological or physical. Man finds that he has to struggle to bring the two lower levels into balance with the spirit.

So it can easily happen that a man's spirit may be infused with grace but this has little effect on his conscious, visible actions. The Baptism of a baby is a good example, because there is no real way the grace received in the soul can affect the baby's psychological processes or bodily actions. The same thing can happen in a neurotic, where improper psychological functioning thwarts the influence of grace. The proper atmosphere for the life of grace called sanctity is natural maturity. Without this maturity, the spiritual cannot be incarnated in the entire person. Still, the person will have grace and so is the possessor, germinally, of the freedom of the children of God. Psychologically, however, he may not be free to give a thoroughly human response to God's love.

What has affected the psychological processes of many religious to the extent that they are hardly recognizable as other Christs? Our Lord spent years and years on earth working, suffering, offering in order to free men. Did he do this in order to have men turn this new, wonderfully fresh life into a quagmire of fears? Was the Spirit of God sent to stifle the spirit of man? Very probably a modern Ezechiel would view religious life as a plain filled with "dry bones." "He made me walk among them in every direction so that I saw how many they were on the surface of the plain. How dry they were!" (Ezech. 37:2).

Observation of the situation seems to point to relationships as a fundamental area of disturbance. Christianity is a matter of relationships. And these relationships, in some way, must spring from love. Our Lord made this clear in his summation of the Christian life: (1) Love God, and (2) love your neighbor. In great measure Christians have failed in the second commandment, and this causes one to wonder just how well the first commandment has been fulfilled.

The problem has been accented by Father Ignace Lepp, a convert from atheistic Communism. At one time Father Lepp had been very active in the social movements of the Church in France, but recent years have found him, more and more, studying and attempting to improve relationships between individuals. Here is the basis for social action. It is too easy to speak in general terms about organizations and movements, too easy to group people into categories with little knowledge of the individuals forming the groups.

The late Pope John XXIII took pains to stress this point. He reminded the world that in any discussion individuals are always involved, and at all times their dignity and rights must be upheld, regardless of their position. "Therefore, Venerable Brothers and beloved children," Pope John wrote in *Pacem in Terris*, "human society must primarily be considered something pertaining to the spiritual. Through it, in the bright light of truth men should share their knowledge, be able to exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations, be inspired to seek spiritual values, mutually derive genuine pleasure from the beautiful of whatever order it be, always be readily disposed to pass on to others the best of their own cultural heritage and eagerly strive to make their own the spiritual achievements of others. These benefits not only influence, but at the same time give aim and scope to all that has bearing on cultural expressions, economic and social institutions, political movements and forms, laws, and all other structures by which society is outwardly established and constantly developed." The dialogue in religion has grown out of an increased awareness of the scandal given by Christians in forgetting Christ's words: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn. 15:12).

If religious are not loving, then they are not going to be free. Love is the center of liberty, the greatest power of a human being. But love appears to be understood only fuzzily by many religious, and this obscurity is a principal reason for the psychological strait jackets encasing many of them. It is easy to understand how one who has inhibitions or misunderstandings about love will appear as a denial that man, body and soul, was freed by Christ.

Of course, every religious has been exposed to some teaching on charity. All were made well aware of the meaning of their Baptism, and their consequent state as children of God having charity. And included in the virtue of charity, religious know, is not only love of God but also love of neighbor. But just what this love of neighbor is or looks like was not made very clear. There was some understanding that religious had to be good to people, to wish them well. At the same time religious knew, from classes, conferences, their own reading, that the vow of chastity put severe limitations on their experiences with others. Sensual movements or feelings of any type appeared to be out of order in one's charitableness. Somehow the impression was given that to relate to another person as a human being, in a human manner, was at least suspect.

It is a fact that the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and Jansenism worked havoc with the notion of love. That the distortions are still present today is evidenced by the plight of many religious. The anguish caused by the emphasis on the dangers involved in friendships, whether within one's own community or outside of the community, has been considerable. Group living, with casual, detached friendliness is often the order of the day.

Relationships remain on the surface, superficial. As a consequence of this distrust of love in too human terms, religious turn in on themselves. Each one is locked inside himself. Instead of being an individual, the religious will assume a role, that manner of acting which he imagines best exemplifies "the Brother," or "the Sister," or "the Priest." Then again he may be forced into the role of the community clown, or possibly the community's contribution to the intellectual life of the Church.

It is no wonder that after several years in religious life, during which the person's energies are spent scrupulously guarding relationships and suppressing affections, the religious gives a cold, dried-up appearance. Even the grace of Christ cannot ordinarily penetrate the psychological mechanisms built up over a period of years. The resulting inhibitions and fears cramp the one person in the world who should be most free, both spiritually and psychologically.

An extreme turning-in on oneself simply adds to the warping in a person already begun by his heritage of original sin. This wound in our nature causes a hard core of pride in us, a pride turning everything back on the individual. The person in the next room, the superior in his room, the community at large are not important to the individual because he sees all in reference to himself. It is hard talking about love to such a one.

But there must be love somewhere if this person is to be orientated away from himself. Someone else must first love the person, with an acceptance and a recognition that will help unlock the prison of the other. Loved by another, the religious will begin to realize his dignity and worth. He can get outside himself and become objective in viewing his own position in relation to the rest of the world. He realizes his need for others and begins to understand relationships.

He learns to give of himself to others; he is not afraid to love. And he perceives that love, even the love of the religious, involves the whole person. Natural love is a matter of emotions as well as a matter of will. There are dangers, certainly, but they are far outweighed by the emergence of the human being developed under the rays of love. The person becomes psychologically mature, and so provides a solid basis for the workings of grace.

The one who loves sees the beauty and dignity of the other person. He sees the other as some one, not just another thing outside himself. A sharing on the deepest level takes place, and all one's powers are involved in the love that is alive, burning, strong. Justus Lawler speaks of this love as "spirit diffused through persons."

Love is demanding, because it forces the one who loves to go outside himself, where there is always a danger of being hurt. He now becomes responsible for another, and so his independence is seriously threatened. When a person loves, old values are challenged, new light is thrown on a former manner of living. It can be painful. It can be humbling, too, because it can evoke anxiety and jealousy in a person who thought himself free of these burdens.

And there is no doubt that love changes one's life. In unifying the powers of the individual, love puts joy and exuberance into a

person's life. He becomes sparkling and alive. A new confidence and self-assurance eliminate the defences of old.

The one who loves sees in people a grand creation that others never glimpse. And because he has seen deeply into the mystery of a person, he begins to see more deeply into himself, and into everything outside himself. He is struck by the bond of unity between himself and all creatures. The beauty and goodness found in one of God's creatures is found again and again in other creations.

The effect of this love in a community is obvious. Gentleness and spontaneity mark the life of the religious who truly loves. Humility and simplicity quietly take charge. Without self-consciousness, the religious puts his talents at the service of the community, letting his "little light shine." The community senses the presence of a real person in their midst, interested, warmly loving, generously sacrificing for them; Christ is with them in this person, and their strength is renewed.

Love is expressed, practically, in time and attention. Interest is shown in the concerns of others, wants are anticipated. Sick ones are visited, successful ones are congratulated, complaining or sorrowing ones are given a chance to express what is in them. Erich Fromm asks his readers how many truly loving persons they have known. When one stops to think about it, the lack of love in life becomes apparent.

It is no wonder that modern liturgical practices are not immediately welcomed. The idea of a People of God is a foreign concept to those who do not have an appreciation for community. Certainly, the liturgy will instruct, but as always a natural foundation is needed. Though living in "communities," religious must develop a deeper awareness of community, and this will only be achieved if there are loving relationships.

Religious who have learned to love as human beings cannot fail to be effective in the work of their community. Many of those people who are helped by religious do not feel that they have any particular relationship to others. They have no special concern for their neighbor, if they even know him. Love is absent in their lives, and with this power untapped their development as integrated human beings is severely hampered. The religious who loves these people with a love that is real, concerned, can bring

them to fruition as human beings. This is not done by merely wishing them well, but by expressing this love by involvement in their situation. The world has to be made a fit place for human beings, not angels, and only loving human beings can do the job. If a religious is a real person, open and giving of self, his apostolate is on solid ground. What he is will frequently effect more than what he does.

To repeat, many religious have been unable to give expression to their status as free children of God. Many times the individual religious will appear to others as one who has made a bad decision and is saddled with it. Frequently in universities and colleges where religious study with lay people, the religious are categorized as stern-looking, impersonal, "curve-breakers."

The picture will change only when religious are formed in accord with their human nature, when they understand friendships and love, and are not afraid to relate to other people as human beings. They will love as anyone else loves, prudently but warmly. Only then will the psychological strait jacket be removed. Inhibitions and repressions will be diminished, and the fearful, hesitant look will give place to joy and confidence in living. Here will be a solid foundation for supernatural charity. Grace, formerly only residing on the spiritual level, can now incarnate itself in the psychic life of the individual. Because he has encountered others and loved them, the religious will be able to live out of his spirit. Because he has encountered others and loved them, he will be better able to encounter God and love him.

Religious cannot afford to ignore the humanity they have in common with the world, particularly in these times when the world aches for real, complete people. The almost unanimous sorrow at the death of such men as Pope John XXIII and John Fitzgerald Kennedy witnesses to the still-living heart of mankind. For these rare, brief periods in history men are allowed to live out of their spirit. "I will give you a new heart, and breathe a new spirit into you; I will take away from your breasts those hearts that are hard as stone, and give you human hearts instead" (Ezech. 36:26,7). People sensed in these two leaders eminently human qualities, qualities common to all men but vital in few.

The aged Pope in Rome showed men how one loves. He visited hospitals and prisons. He wrote letters to the world, daring to believe that there was hope for this weary planet, that the heart of man was worthy of trust. Man was not to give up, but, the Pope urged in *Pacem in Terris*, "all human beings ought rather to reckon that what has been accomplished is but little in comparison with what remains to be done: because organs of production, trade unions, associations, professional organizations, insurance systems, legal systems, political regimes, institutions for cultural, health, recreational, or athletic purposes — these must all be adjusted to the era of the atom and of the conquest of space, an era which the human family has already entered, wherein it has commenced its new advance toward limitless horizons."

And John Kennedy, in his own way, exemplified the freedom of the mature Christian, the Christian who has balance and continuity in his life. His life is a challenge to the mediocre religious, to those worn down by living, lacking in love. In a subtle way he preached, and people understood, that the future was not inevitable. He showed that one man, maintaining ideals and daring to hope and love, could dent this world. Action with courage and aggressiveness, responsibility with joy, posture and speech with confidence, relationships with attention and understanding — all were his hallmarks. At the same time that John Kennedy's life was preaching, Pope John's pen was affirming, in *Mater et Magistra*, that the presence of the Church "brings about the rebirth, the resurrection, of each individual in Christ; and the man who is reborn and rises again in Christ never feels himself constrained from without. He feels himself free in the very depth of his being, and freely raised up to God. And thus he affirms and develops that side of his nature which is noblest and best."

Undoubtedly this is an age of the Spirit of God. Too many important realizations and insights are growing, too many movements are sinking roots to be labeled normal activity. Religious are being called to witness to God as human beings in these days. If religious cannot love they are crippled, but if they are loving their force is incalculable. The "dry bones" will live again: ". . . and the spirit came into them; they came alive and stood upright, a vast army" (Ezech. 37:10).

Coadjutors in the Life of the Church

WILLIAM F. HOGAN, C.S.C.

Most religious communities today find themselves with a relatively small number of aspirants to such positions as cooks, laundresses, housekeepers, etc., and are faced with an increasing discontent or dissatisfaction on the part of the religious engaged in these works, who so often feel that they are simply a form of inexpensive help. There are many elements underlying this problem, not the least of which is the historical situation of a distinction among the classes of religious; today's religious has come from a classless society and such a distinction is utterly foreign to it. Thus the distinction into classes has in principle disappeared in all but a very few communities; however, in actual fact older religious often act as if it still exists. This is especially true of the so called "lay" brother or sister, better known as the coadjutor. There are many coadjutors who keep to themselves, avoiding social contacts with the other religious of their houses, because this was the way they were trained.

Another factor in the problem of the shortage of coadjutor vocations is the unfortunate way in which manual labor is looked down upon by man in today's society. This age is marked by an exaggerated emphasis on education in the sense that too many feel that everybody without exception should receive a college education; this attitude is totally unrealistic in that it fails to take into consideration native intellectual ability, and it creates an undeserved belittling of physical work. Youth who apply for entrance into religious communities bring this attitude with them for the most part and are reluctant to be engaged in works other than teaching, nursing, etc. A change in the philosophy of life will be needed to remedy this factor, but perhaps religious communities could help the situation by imparting more of a professional character to the work of the coadjutor by setting up workshops for those engaged in the same tasks or permitting them to attend the workshops which are beginning to be held for them in various places.

Perhaps the most important factor is one which is associated with religious life in general: ecclesial mindedness. Most religious are characterized on the practical level by a narrow vision, though speculatively they may view religious life in a broader context. Their concern is basically their personal relationship to God and to their community. They do not see concretely their relationship to the Church or the implications of their lives in the life of the Mystical Body. If religious engaged in works which put them more directly in contact with people often fail to see the full consequences of their lives in relation to the Church and her apostolate, then surely those persons engaged in the hidden works of the community will have an even more difficult time to realize the full import of their lives and work. Usually these latter are told that by working to assist those who work directly with souls they are actually participating in the work with souls. A strong spirit of faith is needed to be satisfied with this role, and it is not the whole picture by any means. If coadjutors (and others) were trained to see the fullness of religious life in the life of the Church, the effects might be astounding on the life of individuals and of the community.

The principal element in the formation of this mentality is the inculcation of a deep appreciation of the meaning of the Christian life. The idea of the Mystical Body is too often considered as a figure of speech instead of the reality that it is, and there is a failure to appreciate the effects on the life of the Church that result from the actions of the members. Much stress must be placed in the years of formation on the doctrine of the Mystical Body and how its life is intensified through the good works of those who compose it. This is of the utmost importance because the religious life is not a separate reality from that of the Christian life, and a religious is basically a Christian in the state of perfection. To grasp the meaning of the religious life, the Christian life must first be understood.

Then religious will have a clearer notion of what religious life actually is; they will come to view their communities as a nucleus of cells which visibly manifest both the visible and invisible elements of the Church and bear testimony to the world concerning the Church and the Christian life. They will look upon the common

life as a special living out of the life of love of the Mystical Body; they will see their vows as the completion of their baptismal consecration and realize why religious profession is called a "second Baptism." They will realize that their religious habit is a permanent baptismal robe declaring the death to self and rising to the life of grace which started with the reception of Baptism. Their constitutions will be seen as precisions of the laws of the Christian life for those who have professed to lead the Christian life to the highest degree; and other elements of the religious life will be seen in a truer perspective.

Religious life is not lived as it should be unless it is viewed in relation to the Church, and many of the difficulties facing religious stem from the lack of a vital ecclesial outlook. This is especially true of the coadjutor religious and the sense of frustration often experienced by them; if they can be formed with this broad view, they will see the importance of their lives. Instead of viewing their vows as a purely personal sacrifice, they will see the effects of the observance of their vows on men everywhere.

How rarely are religious, and especially coadjutors, made aware of the consequences of their vows on the Christian life, the life of the Mystical Body! They may be taught that the Christian life and its intensification in the religious life is a process of dying to self and rising to Christ, begun in the reception of Baptism and continued through participation in the liturgy and the pursuit of perfection. Possibly they have also been instructed that the Church is ever engaged in the process of intensifying the life of the risen Christ within her in this world, but that this process is a difficult one and the Church ever undergoes tension because she is immersed in a material world. But have the two ideas been connected for them? Have they come to realize that as religious give themselves totally to Christ and live out their vows, they assist the Church in fulfilling her mission to mankind in drawing all things to God? Have they been formed to look at their religious consecration not merely as a personal act but a social commitment, wherein their own renunciations contribute to the continuing redemption of the Mystical Body, intensifying the very life of the Church and its effects on the life of the members? If religious were made aware of this, what greater generosity there would be in living out the

religious commitment. If coadjutors grasped this, a deeper appreciation of their lives would result.

Through the vow of poverty a religious frees self of concern with the material, giving more place to the spiritual; the Church increases the presence of the divine life in the world in proportion to the religious' observance of poverty, and souls benefit from this increase. Thus the individual religious accomplishes good for souls without even coming into physical contact with them, by reason of the poverty practised, for the members of the Body of Christ affect one another through their union in Christ. The same is true of the vow of chastity pronounced by the religious; the very existence of the soul consecrated by this vow becomes a source of life for the Church and men. The religious withdraws self from the human and physical in an act of generous love to become more possessed by the life of the Godhead; through the religious, holy mother Church is more withdrawn from the human and more possessed by divine life. Just as physical love yields the fruit of children in marriage, so the spiritual marriage of the consecrated person results in spiritual children and the fostering of divine life in others throughout the Mystical Body. And this is true of all religious, even of those who never come in contact with the laity in the classroom or hospital — they foster the life of grace in others by living out their consecration to chastity. The coadjutor is indeed a mother or father of souls!

By the vow of obedience the religious partakes of the very act of submission wherein Christ was obedient unto death; he undergoes death to self with Christ and lives more by the Spirit, being more possessed by God. What is true of the part becomes true of the whole of the Mystical Body, and the Church becomes more possessed by divine life in proportion to the obedience of the individual. This intensification of divine life in the Mystical Body redounds to the good of the members. Further, the vow of obedience completes the religious' share in the priesthood of Christ because it puts the religious in the state of victimhood in union with the divine victim; surely God bestows special graces on the individual in return, and these graces will have an effect on the whole Church to some degree. Thus the obedient religious effects much good for others through observance of obedience.

Similarly, the common life lived in religious houses has results outside the walls of the building. This life is not merely a juridical reality in the sense that all the members eat the same food, dress alike and have the same furnishings in their rooms. These externals of the common life are required by the law of the Church in order to promote the common life, which is an inner, spiritual reality — the life of love. The common life is actually the very life of love of the Trinity communicated to the Mystical Body and lived out with a special intensity within the religious community. When individual religious strive to deepen this life of love by going out of themselves to give themselves to their fellow religious in a true spirit of love, they are actually promoting the life of the Mystical Body and performing ecclesial acts. In furthering the common life within their houses, religious likewise are developing attitudes of love towards fellow Christians outside the cloister, since the effects of their actions transcend physical walls. The coadjutor religious are in position to develop the common life even more than the teacher or the religious engaged in some other profession, for their work often touches aspects of the common life of the community more directly. The cook perhaps does not realize it, but her little extras can do much to develop a deepened love on her own part toward the community and can help the other religious to appreciate the common life more; the effects are not simply on stomachs or psyches, but are spiritual and apostolic, for the whole Church actually benefits. The housekeeper who strives to do her best to keep the house in good order out of a spirit of love and concern for the other members of the community, has promoted the life of the community and consequently that of the larger reality of which the community is a part. But these ramifications of seemingly material actions are not at all obvious to the coadjutor unless they have been pointed out and stressed during formation. If they are not made clear, then one can but expect that the coadjutor will not have a vital appreciation of her role.

Stress on the cultural aspects of work is another "must" in the training of the coadjutor. There is an initial consecration to God of all labors undertaken under obedience through the religious profession, a consecration to be ever renewed through purity of

intention. These consecrated labors become a type of liturgy, a liturgy which is due to God on the part of religious communities and of all Christians. Those religious engaged in manual labor which is dedicated to God help to fulfill the Church's duty of offering incessant worship to God; God in turn bestows an increase of life on the Church and souls. Too often the vision of the religious worker, and indeed of all religious, is limited to the purely personal; but there really is no such thing as the purely personal in the Christian life. All prayer and consecrated labor is really interiorly apostolic in the sense that the Church interiorly is vitalized through it, and this is a prerequisite to any exterior apostolic works, if they are to be effective.

Religious who are engaged in works which do not bring them into contact with people directly will appreciate their role in the life of the Church much more if they can be formed to view their lives in the light of these ecclesial ideas. Other religious, too, will come to realize that the contribution of the coadjutor is of the utmost importance to the life of the Church, and will not fall into the temptation to look down on this role as being that of a necessary servant of the community. Ecclesial mindedness actually shows that it really doesn't make too much difference what type of work a religious is engaged in; for they are all dignified and serve to increase the role of the Church in the world.

Perhaps the coadjutor will not have the psychological satisfaction or consolation of having worked directly with souls; but this effect is not of real significance to the role of religious and it is often very illusory. We all like to see effects, but this is due to the human in us. The real effects, those which are important, are spiritual and are experienced within the bosom of the Church as the Godhead pours forth a greater intensification of divine life. There is no need for the coadjutor to limit his or her vision simply to pots and pans, mops, hammers and screwdrivers, or ledgers; neither should the spiritual life be seen only in terms of self and God. The very essential elements of the religious state have an effect on the Christian life of the Church; our vision must be in proportion to these effects. Our faith must extend to the social aspects of the Christian life. Only if the coadjutor develops the realization of his vital contribution to the life of the Church, will

he have a true picture of the coadjutor's vocation, which is not merely to assist those whose work is with souls but to assist holy mother Church in her life in the world.

To promote this ecclesial view of the coadjutor vocation, a view which is realistic, it will be necessary to stress these ideas during formation and to frequently recall them later through spiritual conferences for coadjutors and through the spiritual direction or admonitions given them by the superior. All efforts undertaken in this regard will bear ample fruit in the life of the coadjutor religious, the life of the community, and especially the life of the Church.

"the law of gravity, the beast"

—Muriel Spark, *Memento Mori*

Ignorance: as if some old bears, let out
of cages, grown so used to the estranging
thud of a short pace, a horizon of bars,
that they expect to be halted—but their keeper has gone—

would pad perhaps dully over the zoo's
grounds, or standing together or turning would load
the universe like sleep. Their terrible black-pawed
weight as they patrol the lanes between our cages

the law of gravity, the beast, blind, blinding,
would bring low all things, bear
all down, and be thrown off, never.

Except at the last, by light, by a wind of passage,
a stream of clouds, the rush of Christ in the upper
air, the free blowing, the final fire.

SISTER MARY JONATHAN, O.P.

LEARNING HOW TO LOVE. VII

Friendships in the Novitiate

A. DURAND

Postulants and novices are in a class by themselves in many respects, but especially with regard to the forming of friendships. Such is their need for caution that one is half-inclined to advise them not to allow themselves any friendships at all. But this would be extreme. The novitiate may hold some quite mature persons, with experience of life, to whom the remarks we are going to make about teen-agers do not apply; or it may receive young people who are already true friends, and have been for years; and, even among the majority, there may be a few souls with virtue and judgment sufficient to permit them safely to enter into a friendship. But it remains true that most novices should view with deep misgiving any tendency in themselves to become especially attached to anyone else. If there is any environment on earth likely to promote false and foolish attachments, it is that of the novitiate.

Here are a few reasons for these remarks.

First of all, friendship takes time, and there isn't likely to be enough. As we have seen, if friendship is the real thing, it cannot spring up suddenly. It supposes a slow, unconscious exploration of another's character — all the more slow because the other character, if it is a good one, will not disclose itself easily. Again, it supposes prayer and prudence on our part: "If thou wouldst get a friend, try him before thou takest him and do not credit him easily" (Eccl. 6:7). Unless the novitiate is a small one (in which case there is an additional reason for avoiding friendships), in the first year or two we learn everybody's name and a little about them. The time remaining is not enough for the development of a relationship which may influence our whole lives.

The second and most important reason for caution is to be found in a truth that may not be popular among those to whom it applies, but it is a truth we must face. The novitiate usually

is composed of teen-agers, and teen-agers often are not mature or entirely responsible in their human relationships.

Lest it seem that this is a merely personal impression, let us turn to Saint Thomas Aquinas, whose authority cannot be questioned. If we find it astonishing that the teen-age "crush" was a common phenomenon in his time, seven centuries ago, then we will find it still more astonishing to learn that in the following passage Saint Thomas is only explaining certain observations of Aristotle made about sixteen centuries earlier. Teen-agers are not a new phenomenon in the world.

> First, as regards the things which they find entertaining, it should be noted of young people that, as their age changes, so do their objects of pleasure. Children do not enjoy the same things as youths, nor youths the same things as young adults. This is why the young make friends easily, and easily drop them; because the source of the fun they have together is also the source of their friendship, and when the one goes, the other goes with it. Sudden change is a characteristic of youthful pleasures, for the reason that it is the very change or novelty itself that they enjoy so much.
>
> And we see that the same thing is true of the young friends themselves. Young people are very amorous, that is, sudden and quick in their attachments. It is not by calm choice that they give their affection, but out of emotion, and to the degree that it is they themselves whom they want to gratify. Hence, it is with great intensity that they love a friend. And, since passion is a thing that quickly fades, just as it quickly arises, the result is that, just as teenagers are suddenly on fire with feeling for somebody, so they soon cool off, and can be in and out of friendship several times in a single day. However, for as long as an attachment lasts, they want to be with their sweeties all the time, and never to leave each other, because they have such a good time together. And this is friendship as you find it in such persons.

"Young people are very amorous," observes Saint Thomas — a condition for which Saint Augustine found a wonderful phrase. When he left home at the age of sixteen to attend school in Carthage, he thus described himself: "I was not in love with anybody yet, but I was in love with love." Please notice that it was not at the age of sixteen that Saint Augustine wrote that sentence. Nobody aged sixteen could write it, because no one in their early

teens is aware that, or how, or why, they are so easily swept off their feet, and so easily lose their hearts and their heads. The reasons are given in that long passage from Saint Thomas: it is because the young people themselves are changing so rapidly; hence they enjoy change, and cannot resist the fascination of a new face, a new voice, a new manner. Nowadays when radio, television, and all the other means of communication make it possible for teen-agers all over the world to know immediately what everybody else is doing, we witness incredible waves of brief but intense devotion to popular singers, actors, or dancers. It is not the personalities of the performers, it is not their art (better write "art"), which explain the vast audiences and all the swooning or screaming. The need these thousands of youngsters are satisfying lies in themselves; their emotions must find release, and ever-changing means of release. They are in love with love. When you are in love with love, you may not be in love with anything or anybody in particular yet, but you soon will be, and almost anything or anybody will do.

Now, with Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Saint Thomas, and the human experience of several thousands of years all ranged against us, it is no use telling ourselves, if we are teen-agers, that somehow or other we are going to escape the emotional confusions of the teens. No use moaning over these little fits, either. They are like measles, except that they can be more painful, and can be caught more than once.

Ordinarily, measles, though annoying, are nothing much to worry about. But when the young victim happens to be low in resistance, or in an unhealthy environment, even measles can be dangerous, and it is in virtue of this principle that we must make comparison with the state of the novice. Novices are not normal teen-agers in a normal environment, such as Saint Thomas had in mind, and of whom Saint Augustine found himself a typical specimen. Novices are young people only recently cut off from family affections, homesick at times, a bit bewildered perhaps, facing a hard, strange routine with considerable silence and monotony about it, and learning how lonely it can be in a crowd, when that crowd is not interested in you but in a high and serious ideal. They are only beginners in charity: they can get no great strength

or comfort from prayer, at least not all the time; and Christ is not yet a powerful presence in their lives. Now, can we imagine any persons in the world more likely to walk right into a false friendship? Any group more likely to be deceived by passion and emotion, and so to reject correction or advice? If they were in the world, this silly infatuation would have to compete with all sorts of other distractions; it would be made the subject of teasing by the rest of the family; and so it could not last very long, nor interfere seriously with the business of life. In the novitiate, it can become all-absorbing, and can last much longer, for the simple reason that it will be all they have. And what makes everything so much worse is that an infatuation of this type, while harmless enough in the world, is far from harmless in the closed company of a band of souls trying to prepare for the most beautiful of all lives. On those involved, the effect will be, at the very least, simply to make their training absolutely useless for the time being. A month, six months, a year of noviceship can go by with no profit, if spent in a state of teen-age crush. This is to say nothing of the possible loss of a vocation altogether, or the harm that may be done to others.

As novices, our business is to tackle two things at once — two things that have to be done at once if they are to be done at all. First, we must find out if we have a vocation; secondly, we must prepare ourselves for it. These two aims have to be worked at simultaneously, because the only way to discover whether or not we are called to the religious life is to try living as if we were; and only by living as if called do we prepare for our vocation. In a way, then, it is more important for the novice than even for the professed Sister to achieve some spirit of poverty, chastity, and obedience: delay in an earnest attempt to be a good nun means delay in finding out whether this is our true vocation or not.

Any novice will therefore tell herself that friendship is a risk, that attractions in this direction had better be prudently fought down. What we are trying to do is too important, and we have too little time. If we give way to an emotional attraction for someone else, we may find ourselves caught in nothing better than a silly crush (silly and comic to everybody but the victims), which may put an end to any sincere desire to live as part of our new

family, may fill the mind with vague longings for affection, and leave us so unsure of ourselves that we can never make any clear and firm decision for Christ. Whether we go or whether we stay, we want no misgivings later; we want a solid decision, built on prayer and detachment.

The mention of going or staying brings us to a last reason for resisting the tendency to form attachments while in the novitiate, and it is again a good one. When our vocation is still in doubt, and our own emotional balance and power of judgment far from perfect, any sort of crisis may push us towards a rash decision. Now, it is a simple fact that one third or more of the young people in any novitiate are not going to reach final vows. (I do not like the expression "will not persevere," because only God knows whether or not it is lack of perseverance which explains departures). Here we are, members of this group, with the grave duty of finding what is our Lord's will for us. We must know, and know for sure, whether we are called. Now, will it be a wise thing to allow ourselves to become deeply attached to a companion who perhaps may suddenly disappear? I am not suggesting that we are likely to give up the ship simply because someone else has done so, even if that someone appeared far more fervent and virtuous. (Any novice silly enough to quit because a neighbor has quit should not wait for the neighbor's decision, and indeed should never have been allowed to enter in the first place.) But we are human; the departure of any companion can be disturbing, and the departure of a companion whom we admire and love, who has become a friend, is bound to be deeply disturbing. Surely, then, our Lord will be better pleased if, while proving our vocation, we do nothing else; better pleased if we give ourselves entirely to this one task, and risk nothing at all which might compromise it. Christ will send us friendship some day, if it be his holy will; meantime, there are all these plain signs that, while we are still novices in his love and service, our best course is one of discipline and detachment.

THE AUTHORS

Father Rory Welch, O.Carm., writes from Whitefriars Hall in Washington, D.C. He has previously contributed to *Review for Religious* and *Cross and Crown.* — *Father William F. Hogan, C.S.C.*, is chairman of the theology department in Stonehill College, North Easton, Massachusetts. — *Sister Mary Jonathan, O.P.*, teaches English at Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. — With his article on friendships in the novitiate, *Father A. Durand* of St. Peter's Seminary, London, Ontario, concludes his series of articles on human loves.

Book Reviews

PSYCHIATRY AND RELIGIOUS FAITH. By Robert G. Gassert, S.J. and Bernard H. Hall, M.D. The Viking Press, New York, 1964. Pp. xx, 171. Cloth, $3.95.

Father Robert Gassert, recently a theological fellow in the Menninger program on religion and psychiatry, and Dr. Bernard Hall, a senior member of the staff of Menninger Foundation, set their aim in this book: to lay the groundwork among their fellow Catholics for developing an informed, concerned, and balanced attitude toward mental illness and the mental health professions. The refreshingly open and positive approach of the authors is, in itself, a healthy stride in this direction.

The opening chapter on psychiatry and religion answers the overworked question: Does a Catholic who seeks psychiatric help run a serious risk of losing his faith? Quite simply they answer, "Not if his faith amounts to anything." Both psychiatry and theology are concerned with trying to release many from the superficialities and distortions which cripple the living out of their faith. Neither the doctor nor the priest expect psychiatry to be a substitute for religion.

The tone of compassion and understanding that runs through the chapter on the meaning of mental illness is heartening. There are answers for those who ask: Is mental illness a product of sin and evil? Is mental illness in all of us a matter of degree only? There is a reproach for those who consider themselves immune; there is great hope for those who suffer from mental disturbance.

A very readable chapter on theoretical views on the cause of mental illness makes it clear that acceptance of Freud's discoveries about the way the mind of man works is not the same as agreeing with some of his assumptions about that man. A few delightfully crisp sentences are addressed to those who flatly reject anything with a psychoanalytic tang to it.

Basic facts about diagnosis, treatment, and psychotherapy are clearly presented in chapters on psychiatric practice. The authors' emphasis on psychotherapy as the most beneficial way of treating the mentally ill, flows naturally from the warmth and genuine understanding reflected in their words: Patients get well through other people. They improve through their daily association with people who are concerned about them and are trained to treat them. Psychiatry has not found a drug that can substitute for human interchange in helping a patient to find for himself a better way of living.

Questions of referral, selection of candidates for religious life, and superior-psychiatrist-subject relationships are treated with respect and professional sensitivity. In general, Sisters, priests, counselors, and others who are trying to understand this area of mental illness will enjoy this book and gain from reading it. It has a wholesome, sound approach to a complex problem: the problem of fostering attitudes that will allow intelligent, informed cooperation between religion and the mental health professions.

Sister M. Andrene Foley, C.S.J.
Regis College
Weston, Massachusetts

VINCENT PALLOTTI, AN APOSTLE AND MYSTIC. By Eugene Weber, S.A.C. Translated by Hrost Vollmer. Alba House, Staten Island, New York, 1964. Pp. 460. Cloth, $5.95.

When we speak of Catholic Action, the name of Canon Cardijn comes to mind at once. Comparatively few realize that one hundred years before the apostle of our day, Saint Vincent Pallotti was guiding men along the same basic lines. Many know little more of Saint Vincent than that he was recently canonized.

Vincent Pallotti: an Apostle and Mystic is a careful study of the life of this Italian saint. Though the volume runs to over 450 pages, one senses that the author's exhaustive research discovered even more about the saint than could be used. This life combines the account of the marvellous with the practical, the bold with the cautious, the deep humility of the saint with the daring to defend himself at the very throne of the Pope. This saint who was in ecstasy at one moment, at another could devise a clever scheme to save a soul that would be worthy of Padre Pro.

Saint Vincent's work coincided with difficult periods in the Church's history. Those situations caused grave suffering, and further suffering sprang from rival claims of other apostolic groups, or the deliberate intent even of clerics to harrass the saint. Some facts cause puzzlement, such as the thirty-six confraternities and societies of which the saint was a member. Of greatest interest, perhaps, is the development of his plans for the apostolate, his friendship with such

persons as Saint Gaspar Del Bufalo, and his influence in the life of Pius IX.

Many readers will find the book too much in the manner of nineteenth century saints' lives. The style is somewhat involved and *old-world.* The author is obviously a hero worshipper, but he really does have a hero! The book is perhaps the most definitive work on the saint. Certainly it is the best known to the reviewer.

Sister M. Aloysia, S.S.N.D.
Mount Mary College
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

THIS IS LOVE. By Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O. The Bruce Publishing Company. Milwaukee, 1964. Pp. vii, 150. Cloth, $3.50.

The fact that Father Raymond's latest book, on the Mass, falls into the genre of the hortative, does not diminish its appeal or its place among the popular spiritual literature of the day. There seems to be a substantial group of readers who await and welcome the demotic type of text that generally flows from Father's pen.

This Is Love is highly personalistic—a hallmark which the author's readers have perhaps come to expect and even to anticipate. The approach is probably justified by his objective here: "It is precisely [a] psychological awareness of ontological reality that we are striving to produce in you." The book is a dialogue wherein the author exhorts *you* to become psychologically alive to your part in the "admirabile commercium" which is the Mass. However, one can hardly evoke a psychological response without addressing the emotions and this is to run the risk of sentimentality; it might also be a flaw to use one's own intimate response as a frame of reference. Nevertheless (if one overlooks the prologue), the book is not really marred but only slightly colored by this subjective tone.

The author does not eschew a purely theological approach to a study of the Mass; he does suggest we achieve this psychological awareness by "thinking theologically." It might be noted, though, that here and there pejorative reference to "intellectuals" and "existentialists" does seem a little defensive—if not a little passé. Considering the "newer" theological situs of seeing man as a whole, any encouragement towards man's fuller participation in the Exchange which will most complete him, will be generally welcomed by all.

Sister Margaret Cortona, O.P.
Edgewood High School
Madison, Wisconsin

SHORT NOTICES

FORTY WAYS FOR FORTY DAYS: A Little Lenten Guide for Novices and Nuns. Queen of the Rosary Novitiate, Amityville, New York. Pp. 15. Pamphlet, 25c. Quantity discounts.

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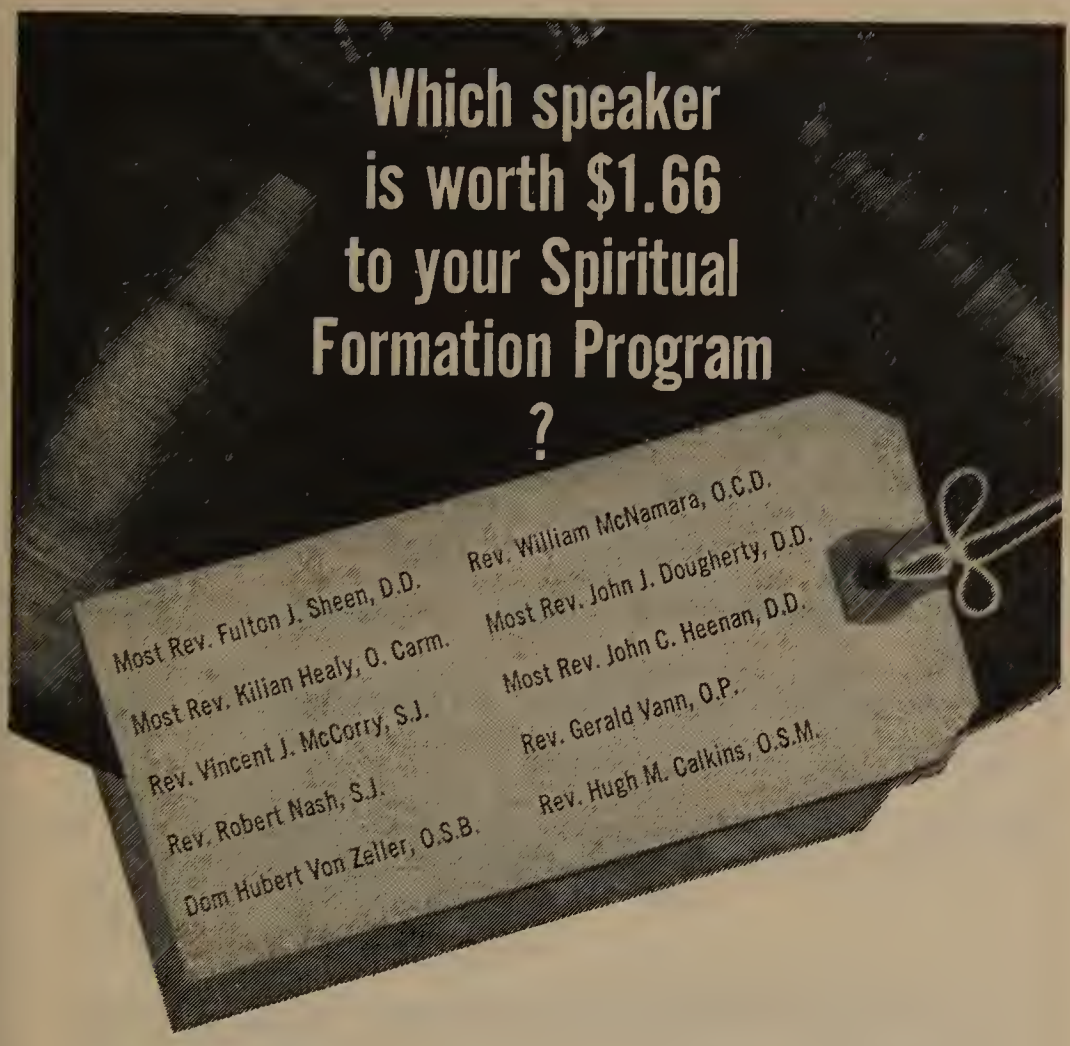
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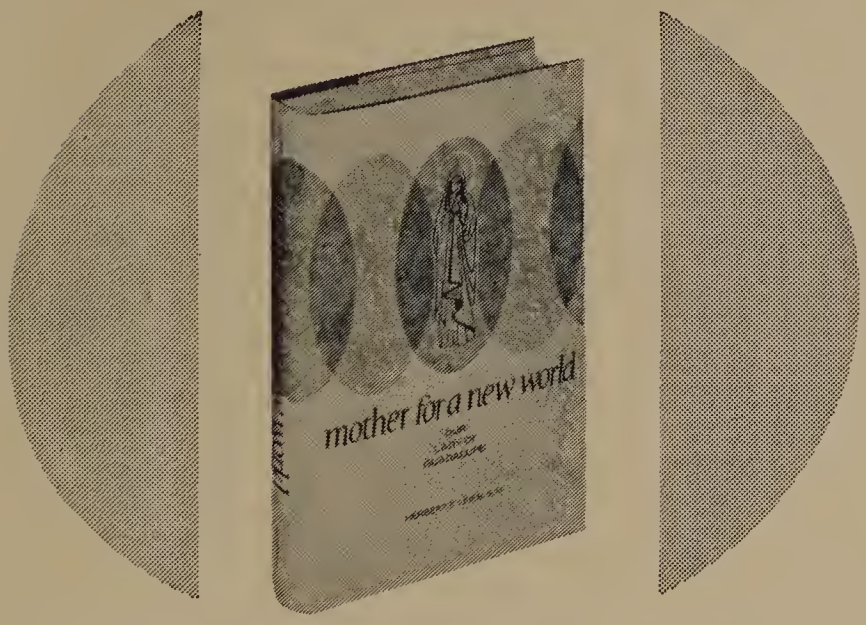

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